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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Report of the Second Committee

Rapporteur: Walter BALZAN (Malta)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 18 September 1992, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in its agenda the item entitled "International cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 38th, 39th, 46th and 51st meetings, on 12, 13 and 25 November and 16 December 1992. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/47/SR.38, 39, 46 and 51). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 3rd to 9th meetings, from 5 to 8 October (see A/C.2/47/SR.3-9).

3. For the consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on policies and activities relating to assistance in the eradication of poverty and support to vulnerable groups, including assistance during the implementation of structural adjustment programmes (E/1992/47);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries (A/47/530);

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(c) Letter dated 30 January 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the Colombo Declaration issued at the Sixth Meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), held at Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 21 December 1991 (A/47/82-S/23512);

(d) Letter dated 6 February 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting documents from the Sixth Islamic Summit Conference, held at Dakar, from 9 to 11 December 1991 (A/47/88-S/23563);

(e) Letter dated 22 May 1992 from the representatives of Indonesia and Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the press communiqué issued at the conclusion of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at Bali, Indonesia, from 14 to 16 May 1992 (A/47/225-S/23998);

(f) Letter dated 2 July 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the position paper on the new world order prepared by the Summit Level Group for South-South Consultation and Cooperation (Group of Fifteen), at its annual meeting held in Caracas, Venezuela, from 27 to 29 November 1991 (A/47/312-S/24238);

(g) Letter dated 17 August 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the Final Communiqué of the Twenty-third South Pacific Forum, held at Honiara, Solomon Islands, on 8 and 9 July 1992 (A/47/391);

(h) Letter dated 14 September 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting a statement issued by the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council at its forty-fourth session, held at Jeddah on 8 and 9 September 1992 (A/47/441-S/24559);

(i) Letter dated 2 October 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member States of the Group of 77, adopted on 1 October 1992 on the occasion of their sixteenth annual meeting, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York (A/47/499);

(j) Letter dated 25 August 1992 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/47/564);

(k) Letter dated 19 November 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General circulating the text of the resolutions adopted by the 87th Inter-Parliamentary Conference, held at Yaoundé, Republic of Cameroon, from 3 to 11 April 1992 (A/47/706);

(1) Note verbale dated 11 September 1992 from the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the Final Statement adopted by the InterAction Council at its tenth session, held at Querétaro, Mexico, from 28 to 31 May 1992 (A/47/437).

4. At the 38th meeting, on 12 November, an introductory statement was made by the representative of the Department of Economic and Social Development (see A/C.2/47/SR.38).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/47/L.52 and L.87

5. At the 46th meeting, on 25 November, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/47/L.52) entitled "Observance of an international day for the eradication of poverty", which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Reaffirming its resolutions 43/195 of 20 December 1988, 44/212 of 22 December 1989, 45/213 of 21 December 1990 and 46/121 and 46/141 of 17 December 1991,

"Recalling its resolution 45/199 of 21 December 1990, in which it proclaimed the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, one of the main characteristics of which is the search for a significant reduction in extreme poverty and a shared responsibility of all countries,

"Recalling also the relevant provisions of chapter 3 of Agenda 21, on combating poverty, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, 1/

"Noting that the eradication of poverty in all countries, in particular in developing countries, has become one of the priorities of development objectives for the 1990s,

"Noting also that efforts at the national and international levels need to be enhanced to ensure the eradication of poverty,

"1. Decides to declare 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, to be observed beginning in 1993;

1/ See Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26 (vol. I)), annex II.

"2. Decides also to devote this day to activities of education, sensibilization and mobilization of the international community to the problems of eradicating poverty through the publication and dissemination of documentaries and information concerning the eradication of poverty in all countries, in particular in developing countries;

"3. Invites all States to devote that day to presenting and promoting national activities on the eradication of poverty through the organization of conferences, round tables, seminars, workshops and exhibits, and the publication and dissemination of documentaries and information with a view to enhancing public awareness of that problem;

"4. Also invites the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to assist Member States, at their request, to organize national activities for the observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty;

"5. Requests the Secretary-General to take the measures necessary to ensure the success of the observance by the United Nations of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty;

"6. Also requests the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the present resolution."

6. At the 51st meeting, on 16 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. José Lino Guerrero (Philippines), introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/47/L.87), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.52.

7. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of France (see A/C.2/47/SR.51).

8. At its 51st meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.87 without a vote (see para. 17, draft resolution I).

9. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.87, draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.52 was withdrawn by the sponsors.

10. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Benin and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the European Community and its member States) (see A/C.2/47/SR.51).

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/47/L.53 and L.88

11. At the 46th meeting, on 25 November, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/47/L.53) entitled

"International cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries", which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Reaffirming the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, contained in the annex to its resolution S-18/3 of 1 May 1990, and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, contained in the annex to its resolution 45/199 of 21 December 1990, the Paris Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, 2/ the United Nations new agenda for the development of Africa in the 1990s 3/ and the Cartagena Commitment adopted in February 1992 at the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 4/

"Also reaffirming the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in principle 5, 5/ Agenda 21 in its chapter 3, 6/ the statement of principles on all types of forests in its principle 7 (a) and all other decisions and recommendations adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development related to the eradication of poverty, 7/

"Further reaffirming its resolutions 43/195 of 20 December 1988, 44/212 of 22 December 1989, 45/213 of 21 December 1990 and 46/141 of 17 December 1991,

"Noting that the eradication of poverty in developing countries has become a top-priority development objective of the 1990s,

"Stressing that effective national policies supported by a favourable international economic environment can promote growth and development in developing countries, thus increasing their capacity to undertake social and economic programmes to eradicate poverty,

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2/ See Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 3-14 September 1990 (A/CONF.147/18), part one.

3/ Resolution 46/151, annex, sect. II.

4/ TD/364, part one, sect. A.

5/ A/CONF.151/26 (vol. I), annex I.

6/ Ibid., annex II.

7/ See A/CONF.151/26 (vols. I, II and Corr.1 and III).

"Noting with concern the negative effects of the debt burden and its impact on the poorer sections of society in developing countries,

"Recognizing that poverty is a complex and multidimensional problem with origins in both the national and international domains and that its eradication constitutes an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

"Noting that the efforts made at the national and international levels need to be enhanced to ensure the eradication of poverty,

"Stressing that the eradication of poverty, in particular in developing countries, requires the realization of economic growth that is both sustained and sustainable as well as a supportive international economic environment,

"1. Takes note of the note by the Secretary-General on international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries; 8/

"2. Stresses the importance of domestic policies, including effective budgetary policies, to mobilize and allocate domestic resources for the eradication of poverty through, inter alia, the creation of employment and income-generating programmes, the implementation of food security, health, education, housing and population programmes and the strengthening of national capacity-building execution programmes;

"3. Encourages all countries to undertake national strategies and programmes for the eradication of poverty, in particular devoted to the poorest strata of society and involving a more active participation of the targeted communities in the initiative, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of specific projects;

"4. Reaffirms that a supportive international economic environment which takes into account the review of resource flows and structural adjustment programmes, integrating social and environmental dimensions, is crucial to the success of efforts of developing countries to deal with the eradication of poverty;

"5. Urges the developed countries to adopt concrete measures for increasing financial support on a grant and concessional basis to developing countries, including measures to achieve the agreed target by developed countries, if they have not done so, of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance and internationally

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8/ See A/47/530.

agreed targets for the least developed countries, as well as new and additional financial resources for the eradication of poverty and sustainable development;

"6. Also urges all donors to contribute generously to the tenth replenishment of the International Development Association equal in real terms at least to its ninth replenishment and to the fourth replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, with a view to ensuring that these institutions continue in their fight against rural poverty;

"7. Further urges the international community to undertake technical cooperation programmes with a view to strengthening income and job creation capacities, to improve food security, health, education and housing for the population and to respond to other essential needs of the population in developing countries, in particular among the poor, and reaffirms in this context the importance of examining effective modalities for the transfer of technology, in particular the one addressed to satisfy the basic needs of the population on concessional and preferential terms, notably for developing countries, with a view to ensuring this transfer as soon as possible;

"8. Encourages the international community including the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to support the development programmes of developing countries, including human resources development programmes, in order to strengthen endogenous technical capacity and generate opportunities for production and employment;

"9. Welcomes the decision of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session to set up a Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation and to request the Trade and Development Board to attach the highest priority to its work in the framework of its agreed terms of reference;

"10. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the progress made in coordinating actions, in cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations and other multilateral bodies, to formulate improved and enhanced action-oriented technical cooperation programmes for the eradication of poverty in developing countries, within the framework of the United Nations system, in accordance with the policies, priorities and strategies of those countries;

"11. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-eighth session an item entitled 'International cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries'."

12. At the 51st meeting, on 16 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. José Lino Guerrero (Philippines), introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/47/L.88), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.53, and orally revised it as follows:

(a) Operative paragraph 5 was revised to read as follows:

"Reiterates its request to the international community to adopt specific and effective measures designed to increase financial flows to developing countries, and urges the developed countries which have reaffirmed their commitments to reach the accepted United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance, to the extent that they have not yet achieved that target, agree to augment their aid programmes in order to reach that target as soon as possible; some countries having agreed to reach the target by the year 2000; other developed countries, in line with their support for reform efforts in developing countries, agree to make their best efforts to increase their level of official development assistance";

(b) In operative paragraph 7, in the first line before the word "undertake" the words "to continue to", should be inserted and, in the eighth line after the words "property rights", the word "and" should be replaced with the words "as well as";

(c) In operative paragraph 10, after the word "poverty" in the fifth line, the words "in all countries, particularly" should be inserted.

13. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of Benin (see A/C.2/47/SR.51).

14. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.88, as orally revised, without a vote (see para. 17, draft resolution II).

15. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.88, draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.53 was withdrawn by the sponsors.

16. After the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of the United States of America (see A/C.2/47/SR.51).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

17. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Observance of an international day for the eradication of poverty

The General Assembly,

Noting that the eradication of poverty and destitution in all countries, in particular in developing countries, has become one of the priorities of development for the 1990s, and considering that the promotion of the eradication of poverty and destitution requires public awareness,

Welcoming the fact that certain non-governmental organizations, on the initiative of one non-governmental organization, have in many States in recent years observed 17 October as World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty,

1. Decides to declare 17 October as International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, to be observed beginning in 1993;

2. Notes that activities undertaken with respect to the Day will take into account those undertaken each 17 October by certain non-governmental organizations;

3. Invites all States to devote the Day to presenting and promoting, as appropriate in the national context, concrete activities on the eradication of poverty and destitution;

4. Also invites the Secretary-General to make recommendations on ways and means by which the United Nations Secretariat could, within existing resources and without prejudice to ongoing activities, assist States in organizing their national activities for the observance of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty;

5. Further invites intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to assist States, at their request, in organizing national activities for the observance of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, paying due attention to the specific problems of the destitute;

6. Requests the Secretary-General to take the measures necessary, within existing resources, to ensure the success of the observance by the United Nations of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty;

7. Also requests the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly at its fiftieth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

International cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, contained in the annex to its resolution S-18/3 of 1 May 1990, and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, contained in the annex to its resolution 45/199 of 21 December 1990, the Paris Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, 9/ the United Nations new agenda for the development of Africa in the 1990s 10/ and the Cartagena Commitment adopted in February 1992 at the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 11/

Also reaffirming the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in principle 5, 12/ Agenda 21 in its chapter 3, 13/ the statement of principles on all types of forests in its principle 7 (a) and all other decisions and recommendations adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development related to the eradication of poverty, 14/

Further reaffirming its resolutions 43/195 of 20 December 1988, 44/212 of 22 December 1989, 45/213 of 21 December 1990 and 46/141 of 17 December 1991,

Noting that the eradication of poverty in all countries, in particular in developing countries, has become one of the priority development objectives for the 1990s,

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9/ See Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 3-14 September 1990 (A/CONF.147/18), part one.

10/ Resolution 46/151, annex, sect. II.

11/ TD/364, part one, sect. A.

12/ See Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26 (vol. I)), annex I.

13/ Ibid., annex II.

14/ See Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26 (vols. I, II and Corr.1, and III)).

Stressing that effective national policies supported by a favourable international economic environment can promote sustained and sustainable development in all countries, in particular in developing countries, thus increasing their capacity to undertake social and economic programmes to eradicate poverty,

Noting with concern the negative effects of large debt burdens and their impact on poorer sections of society in many developing countries,

Recognizing that poverty is a complex and multidimensional problem with origins in both the national and international domains and that its eradication constitutes an important factor to ensure sustainable development,

Noting that the efforts made at the national and international levels need to be enhanced to ensure the eradication of poverty,

1. Takes note of the note by the Secretary-General on international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries; 15/

2. Stresses the importance of domestic policies, including effective budgetary policies, to mobilize and allocate domestic resources for the eradication of poverty through, inter alia, the creation of employment and income-generating programmes, with particular reference to households headed by women, the implementation of food security, health, education, housing and population programmes and the strengthening of national capacity-building execution programmes;

3. Encourages all countries to undertake national strategies and programmes for the eradication of poverty, in particular devoted to the poorest strata of society and involving a more active participation of the targeted communities in the initiative, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of specific projects;

4. Reaffirms that a supportive international economic environment which takes into account the review of resource flows and structural adjustment programmes, integrating social and environmental dimensions, is crucial to the success of efforts of developing countries to deal with the eradication of poverty;

5. Reiterates its request to the international community to adopt specific and effective measures designed to increase financial flows to developing countries, and urges the developed countries which have reaffirmed their commitments to reach the accepted United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance, to the extent that they have not yet achieved that target, agree to augment their aid

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15/ See A/47/530.

programmes in order to reach that target as soon as possible some countries having agreed to reach the target by the year 2000; other developed countries, in line with their support for reform efforts in developing countries, agree to make their best efforts to increase their level of official development assistance;

6. Also urges all donors to contribute generously to the tenth replenishment of the International Development Association, to the fourth replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and other international financial institutions with a view to ensuring that those institutions continue in their fight against poverty, especially in rural areas;

7. Further urges the international community to continue to undertake technical cooperation programmes with a view to strengthening income and job creation capacities, improving food security, health, education and housing, and meeting other basic needs of the populations of developing countries, in particular the poorest groups among them, and in that context, reaffirms that, with respect to the transfer of technology on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as and the special needs of developing countries for the implementation of Agenda 21, effective modalities should be examined with a view to implementing and enhancing that transfer as soon as possible;

8. Encourages the international community, including the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to continue to support the development programmes in all countries, in particular developing countries, including human resources development programmes, in order to strengthen endogenous technical capacity and generate opportunities for production and employment;

9. Welcomes the decision of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session to set up a Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation and to request the Trade and Development Board to attach high priority to its work in the framework of its agreed terms of reference;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the progress made in coordinating actions, in cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations and other multilateral bodies, to formulate improved and enhanced action-oriented technical cooperation programmes for the eradication of poverty in all countries, particularly in developing countries, within the framework of the United Nations system, in accordance with the policies, priorities and strategies of those countries;

11. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-eighth session an item entitled "International cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries".